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I.

THE CHURCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

General Conditions

Executions are not reported in such large numbers as formerly either in the press or by missionaries out of China. There has been a reaction against the excesses in this line. Prison terms are being handed out more frequently and death sentences are often suspended for a year or two pending evidences of reformation.

A revolutionary Marriage Law was promulgated on May 1st 1950 and was probably the first "Law" enacted by the new régime. Re-doubled efforts to implement the provisions of this law are being made. Apparently, Party workers have been slow in rushing into the difficulties attendant upon the implementation of so radical a social measure. The Government is concerned with the failure to enforce the law and much publicity has been given to the fact that a large number of women have been driven to suicide or have been murdered or injured because they have sought the freedom promised by the Marriage Law.

A notable trial in Hankow has emphasized the infallibility of the Party vis-a-vis a member or members. An official assumed to question the rightness of a Party decision and was supported by the local Party hierarchy. The top Party authorities severely condemned this attitude as a "violation of discipline". The essence of the matter in dispute was of no immediate consequence but only that members were guilty of a breach of discipline in not accepting the Party view without question. If the Party is in fact wrong, only the Party itself can acknowledge the fact.

Since last fall the term "Patriotic Pact" has come into use and is called "a yardstick of evergrowing political consciousness of the Chinese people". In every sphere of life, in schools, in factories, in ships, and in the churches, people are taking solemn pledges to carry on definite undertakings in aid of the nation. The Tien Feng Magazine (which might be styled the voice of the pro-Government Church group in China), in celebration of the Communist Second Anniversary of National Victory stated, "Today we are no longer ashamed to be Chinese, on the contrary, it is a most glorious and most prideful position".

Admittedly, Christians and others who have come in contact with Western ideas suffer most heavily from the oppression of the mind and the spirit. Other classes, particularly industrial workers, who have sensed an improvement of their lot, do not feel intimidated or oppressed in spirit. They are behind the Government for they have found some new freedom within the Communist framework, a slight advance in their material condition, at least temporarily, and a chance of learning a little in evening classes, first-aid groups, folk-dancing, parades, and popular propagandist entertainment which gives them a new feeling of dignity and social status.

The Situation of the Churches

One is impressed with the uniformity of the reports of missionaries coming from China to the effect that the churches are carrying on relatively well in the larger centres of population and with an increase in attendance in some places.

Apparently, city churches are not unduly interfered with in their congregational life although the Religious Affairs Bureaus undertake to check up on Christian leaders in some localities and sometimes require that pulpit statements be made which take the Government line. Permission must be obtained for special meetings. The applications for these must state the purpose of the meetings and give the names of out-of-town guests. In some places, meetings in homes are discouraged or forbidden and pastors are admonished to confine their meetings to the churches. Rural churches have continued to fare worse than the city churches. It has become a fixed pattern for officials to close churches in the country as places of worship during the Land re-distribution and to use the buildings as headquarters of the Land Reform cadres. In some places, congregations have not been permitted to resume the use of their churches after land re-distribution has been completed. Sometimes Christians have been afraid to request the rescinding of the closing orders. In one locality the churches have been closed for more than one year. In some rural communities Christians have been intimidated and cases of the burning of Bibles and Hymn books have been reported. Generally, no special restrictions have been placed upon the country churches if their members are deemed to be patriotic, but no new centres of worship may be opened or service activities expanded. Christians sometimes advise their pastors not to visit them lest they be subjected to unfriendly attention. It is difficult for a Christian worker to take up service in a new area where he has not been known previously. Christians are kept so busy with study groups and Land Reform in some places that opportunities for normal church life are meagre.

Little is known of the progress of churches towards self-support. Some country evangelists are helping to support themselves by weaving and knitting and by other means since their congregations can provide little help. Many Christians have been hard hit by Land Reform, special taxes, and other levies upon their resources. Some churches have income from rents to help out. One church operates a dairy, some pastors have taken part-time jobs as teachers or government employees. Paid church workers are being dismissed in many places and volunteers are taking their place. This trend affects Bible schools, women's work and youth work. A missionary who has been connected with the Border Mission reports great vitality in the religious part of that work. While income is much reduced the essential phases of the project go on.

In many places, Christian boys and girls are subjected to various kinds of discriminations to make their lot as difficult as possible. Christians are given duties that conflict with church worship. One missionary states that youth has practically disappeared from the church because "they are kept busy on Sundays attending rallies and study groups". Scholarships were denied to some Christians at a Government university. Nevertheless, the Christian youth fellowships in certain institutions continue very active and have been an inspiration to older Christians. While there is no anti-Christian campaign the usual propaganda directs an attach upon certain Western nations, America in particular, and then links the Christian religion with these nations. Thus there is a kind of indirect anti-Christian campaign. In so far as there is an organised effort against Christians, it is directed against the Roman Catholic churches. A number of Canadian nurses connected with an orphanage in Canton were the victims of a farcical trial and condemned either to expulsion or imprisonment. The Roman Catholic Legion of Mary has been brought under attack and ordered dissolved and

in this connection a number of Catholic missionaires and Chinese Christians have been put into prison. In connection with a great demonstration in Chungking, a priest named Father Tung made a courageous public affirmation of his faith and declared his loyalty to his church superiors. Needless to say he was soon thereafter arrested. A Protestant evangelist took down a picture of Chairman Mao on a Sunday previous to the service. He was imprisoned and later taken to the church and beaten severely with a bamboo pole. A hospital superintendent who is a very active Christian was imprisoned for a period because of two unregistered guests at the hospital about whom he knew nothing. The incident was construed to be an indirect attack upon this Christian leader. The campaign of accusation meetings includes an effort to smear and defame independent Christian leadership.

Both Protestant and presumably Roman Catholic churches are increasingly preaching the duty of patriotism partly spontaneously and partly under government instructions. Christians march in patriotic parades as church groups, singing, yelling slogans and carrying banners. Churches often conduct indoctrination classes and pulpit statements are made in support of Government policies.

Apparently, the campaign of accusation meetings has not been fully satisfactory to the authorities and renewed efforts in this line are in prospect. There is to be a training course of Christian cadres in the proper techniques and the outline of the course supports the view that the chief purpose is to make a success of accusation meetings and confessions throughout the churches. In some places, however, there are indications that the authorities are lukewarm in the matter. Possibly these campaigns of slander and denunciation have passed their peak of the usefulness to the régime. Perhaps they have served the purpose of their instigators fairly satisfactorily in pulling down reputations and neutralising the personal influence of some leaders in the Christian Church.

Attention is now turned more and more toward showing how the minds of people have been changed. A spate of articles is now appearing in church publications upon the general subject of "How my thinking has changed in the past two years". The points usually covered by the writers are changes in thinking about the Communist Party, the nation, religious truth and the philosophy of life.

Institutional Work

Most of the Christian educational institutions have been taken over by the Government. In some cases, consolidations have been effected, as in the former capital where the University of Nanking and Ginling College have been united. In other cases, as for example, Cheeloo University, the Government appears to be determined to change completely the character of the institution by "tearing it to bits", and transferring the several departments to other places and using the campus for a political propaganda centre. Yenching seems less changed than other Christian universities. The Government gives it a large subsidy. West China University has been officially taken over by the Government and every outward trace of Western influence is being removed. Memorial plaques are being scrapped and the motto in the chapel, "The truth shall make you free" has been removed. A change has occured in respect to the authority in administration of institutions and the President, at least in West China, is all powerful with no need to consult representatives of groups within the institution where formerly even the coolies had a voice in administration. No religious gathering may be held on the

on the university grounds at Chengtu. The student Christian Fellowships in some of the universities are keeping up their numbers and are displaying a deep earnestness in their personal spiritual life and are diligent in Christian service.

Some Theological Seminaries have closed because the students are forced to engage in Land Reform. This may be only a temporary situation. The Theological School of Cheeloo proposed to move to Peking and join another school but permission has been withheld pending the Government's study of what its policy is to be towards theological education. Indirect word comes that Nanking Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary of Canton are continuing their work without interruptions. The Yenching School of Religion had financial difficulties which led to an appeal to certain Christian groups in Hongkong to assist. Later word came that no funds need be sent. The reason is not clear, but perhaps the institution has recognised the inadvisability of receiving funds from outside the country.

Practically all Hospitals have come under direct Government control. A notabl exception is Hackett Hospital in Canton where the Board of Directors still functions and the pre-liberation superintendent continues in his position. In Peking, Douw Hospital continues to function well but the standard of medical practice is declining. Nurses' training has been reduced from 3 years to 2 years by Government order. The PUMC continues as a hospital and medical school with its services restricted to upper-class officials and special friends of the régime including members of the diplomatic corps representing countries which have recognized the new Government. Since the charges are low, the Government doubtless subsidizes the institution. The Union Hospital in Hankow continues to be well administered, according to reports although now under the Government and no longer permitted to receive civilian patients. Only members of the Party and the military are admitted No free work seems to be permitted in any hospital. Wounded soldiers fill most of the beds in many hospitals. Evangelistic preaching to patients in hospitals has had to be discontinued but morning prayers for staffs are still allowed. Hospital staff members have little time for church attendance and activities connected with the church. Special duties are often assigned for Sundays including attendance at political meetings and "volunteer labour" on the roads and the streets.

Orphanages have fared in various ways, most of them being taken over by the Government and a few continuing somewhat as before. Where the Government has stepped in efforts have been made to give the impression of a great change for the better. But whether this "improvement" is more than temporary "window-dressing" remains to be seen.

Finance and Property Matters

So far the cases are few where property matters have been made a basis for trouble for the Chinese church and for the missionaries. With the increase of evidence that the Government, through some of its agencies, is interested in collecting various forms of revenue which are indistinguishable from extortion, there may be greater troubles resulting from property. In one city the Head of the Government Church Cooperation Department, addressing students, was asked why the Government was holding up the departure of missionaries. The reply was "Don't worry about them. We keep them until they have nothing left and then they will be thrown out". Missionaries and other foreigners are being subjected to demands that savour of extortion.

In some cases, Chinese church bodies have requested the deeds to mission owned property on the plea that otherwise the church cannot retain control and use of the same even though agreements of transfer of use to Christian bodies were drawn up even before liberation and while the missions were still able to function. In other cases the missions turned over the deeds of property to the church and the church should presumably be in full possession. In some cases it is said taxes have been waived on such properties. It is uncertain whether the church will remain in possession of properties even when transfer was outright. One mission made plans before liberation to hand over all of its property outright and yet the problem of the property remains most perplexing. The consensus of opinion among Christians in some places is that the Government will not rest until all this property has been taken possession of by them, and many church members leaders, would be relieved when the Government finally has found a suitable device to take it over so that the bone of contention disappears. A mere offer from the church to give it to the Government would not be accepted for the Government policy is rather to create such conditions as will make it "warranted in public interest for the Government to step in". Probably this type of situation will be duplicated elsewhere.

II.

THE CHURCH IN EASTERN GERMANY: CONVERSATIONS WITH MARXISTS

It is 10 p.m. We have attended a meeting of university students to hear about the S.C.M. Some have asked questions, others remained silent. Among them was a young woman student with glowing eyes who looked very ill and had obviously suffered during the war. Her dress was poor and her shoes were in bad condition. When we had finished what we had to say, she asked if she could speak. It was after midnight when we separated, all very moved. What had happened?

"I must tell you that I am a member of the Communist Party. I am even a party official. I am not wearing my party badge this evening because I thought it might prevent the others from speaking openly. But don't worry, I'm not a spy. I don't want any food or money from you (althought things are not going well with me); I simply wanted to get to know the Christians at the University who invited me". So she began.

She had been through the invasion of the Red Army. "I was 17 then, in 1945. Of my 12 relations, 10 were killed in this invasion. You don't need to tell me anything. It was terrible. I had been brought up as a Christian. During those days I became a nihilist. Life had lost all meaning". She was asked, "Yet now you have become a Communist, after all these terrible experiences with the Bolshevik army?" "That's just why I became a Communist, for Marx's teaching gave meaning to all this cruelty and horror. It had to be so, and if the Russian soldiers had been real Communists, they would have been more humane to us Germans. But even in Russia it takes time to train good Communists! Now

I am no longer a nihilist. I know what I'm living for: I'm living for the victory of Communism in all countries. Then the age of humanity and freedom will dawn at last and horrors such as happened under Hitler, and during the Russian invasion, can no longer occur. We shall heal the sickness of humanity."

"But supposing the majority of us don't want to be healed by Communism?" She smiled: "Isn't the doctor obliged to give his patient the injection that will save him, even against his will? We are the doctors of the human race."

"That means making a tremendous assumption!" "Which?" "That men are good by nature." "Yes, if that were not true, everything would fall down."

In this conversation some of us had said what we thought very frankly and we asked her, "Perhaps you will now denounce us?" She was shocked. "But, if confidence is not possible between man and man, then life becomes impossible."

We have never seen her again. Where are you, dear young friend, who had managed to keep your heart so unfanatical in spite of your fanatical faith?

After a talk on the Christian faith we are standing in a group, discussing. Some of us are Christians, others Marxists. An official present makes an impression of being a complete fanatic. He defends the remark of one of our government officials that a housewife is only the unpaid servant of her husband and is exploited by him, and that Communism is the only thing which can liberate the housewife from this unworthy position so that she can work in the factory. We disagree and say that in a true marriage the man's salary is shared by both, and that the problem of exploitation does not arise in a marriage when there is love and confidence. He replies, "Yes, that may be so in a few Christian homes, but look at most other marriages. There is no love and confidence, only exploitation. We make the laws to fit the situation as it is." We ask him how he became a Marxist, he replies: "I am a Pastor's son. When I was 16 I became a soldier in an anti-aircraft unit. One day the bombers attacked us and when I saw the dead bodies lying around me I began to ponder on the meaning of this horror, and then I began to be a Marxist. Now I know why wars arise and what we have to do, to prevent a repetition of this carnage." He begins to declaim passionately the doctrine of salvation through Leninism. We immediately realise that he believes in this doctrine, and would be in utter despair if his anti- Christian beliefs proved false.

A splendid young worker has been sitting opposite us for an hour. At 18 he was a leader in the Hitler Youth and was taken prisoner by the Russians. His parents were Nazis. In 1945 they lost their home and all they possessed and his father lost his work. The family are now leading a miserable existence as refugees. The son is enthusiastic about Russia: "Just think, one-sixth of humanity is already free and happy!" His recollections of his five years' imprisonment are all good ones: good food, books, sport, discussions in training-camps for future party officials among the German prisoners! In his titanic idealism he refuses to hear anything about other experiences. He is now working enthusiastically for the party. In his opinion, everyone who is not fighting on his side for peace, is a war-monger. When we point out the real situation in Russia his voice assumes a menacing tone: "That is propaganda against the Soviet Union." Such remarks are not pleasant, for a denouncement may mean many years in a forced labour

camp. We try every possible means of coming even to a purely linguistic understanding with him. With regard to the question of the remilitarisation of Germany (which we oppose both for the East and for the West) we mention our East-German national police which receives daily military training. He contradicts this. We reply, "But we've seen it with our own eyes. Some of these police troops march past our building every day. They are army infantry, not just police." Finally he gets angry: "You keep talking about what you see with your own eyes, and about reality. You must first analyse the matter scientifically and then you will know what is the nature of the national police." So the theory first determines what can and must be, and then things adapt themselves accordingly! The validity of the theory itself is doubtful. We tried in vain to understand one another. We were both speaking German, but we were talking different languages, and had completely lost touch. We told him that everyone in our city was afraid of being arrested. He laughed and called us unpractical fools. When we told him that no-one dared to tell him the truth any longer, since he was a Communist official, he was distressed and denied it vehemently. When we told him that salaries were graded according to the workers' enthusiasm for Communism, and that that was how they convinced the masses, he said, "I know you have to say that, but it's all quite different. Of course, we can't pay salaries to people who don't support us." We parted sadly. Perhaps we ought to have led this conversation into different channels, and tackled him on his ideological bases, instead of drawing him out. What lies in the past of this former Nazi, which makes him seek salvation in a blind faith, and believe more in the theories of Lenin than in the evidence of his own eyes?

We are standing in a crowded railway carriage. A whole group of members of the Communist "Free German Youth" are there and they start a discussion. They describe to us the execution of McGee, the American negro who was said to have attacked a white woman. "What do you say to this scandal of Capitalism?"

"We have only read the Eastern newspapers and have not seen the reports from the other side. As Marxist doctrine teaches that the press is an instrument in the Communist struggle, we assume that this case has also been reported in a way which furthers Communist propaganda. Before pronouncing an opinion, we should have to see the official reports." A young woman, a Communist official, answers with glowing eyes: "I don't need to see such reports in order to know what happened." "You mean, that your theories enable you to decide beforehand the outcome of the trial, and that there is therefore no point in asking what really happened?" "Yes, that's just how it is. We recognise from Marxist theory, how everything is bound to happen in such and such a way. If I were to go into your question about reality, I should be lost; that would be objectivism!" An older man joins in our conversation: "Yes, you didn't think you were going to meet educated people. But this time you've made a mistake. You're not going to make fools of us. And furthermore anyone who talks like you is a war-criminal, for he is helping the capitalists, our enemies"." We try to draw the first speaker out with an example from ordinary life. "Supposing you called on a married couple who had quarrelled. First the woman tells you why they have quarrelled and you have the impression that she is right. Afterwards you hear what the man has to say, and he also maintains that he is right. But it is your job to compare what they both say and to determine exactly what happened, if necessary by calling upon witnesses." The two Communists agree, but say "that would be quite a different case." We part with a friendly shake of the hand. When the Free German Youth have left the train, another young person quietly speaks to us: "Thanks for what you said; I agree with you."

Two young Communists are talking with us. They are trying to persuade us to take part in the voting for "Peace". Out come the usual statements about "Peace". When they have finished, we begin to ask about the nature of their struggle for peace in relation to the teachings of Lenin. They say: "Peace does not mean a condition of peace between nations, but peace in the classless society, which will be achieved through revolution, the collapse of capitalist power and the dictatorship of the proletariat."

"So this plebiscite is also directly connected with belief in the truth of scientific socialism?" "Oh, yes". "But you see, we don't believe that it is the truth!" It nearly takes one's breath away to see how the two react to this unexpected conclusion. "Then what have you got instead of this belief?" And so begins a three-hours' talk about obedience to God's law, the reality of God, and other aspects of Christian faith. One of them who is married, asks, "How can God be real if He has no substance? For nothing can exist without substance." "Is the love and confidence between himself and his wife real, and on the other hand can he prove that it has substance?" He agrees that his conception of what is real is inadequate, even for the relationships between people. He reflects and then puts a surprising question: "But supposing I am lying when I say that love and confidence are a reality between two people?" "Then your marriage must be a very unhappy one!" Then his human side comes to the fore: "You are right; life would be awful without that." We ask other questions. Has Marxism any answer to the question, what is the death of the individual? Without it can there be an answer to the question, what is man? We men exist only as dying men. Has Communism any answer to the reality of evil in us? When he took his leave he said, "I tell you frankly, that is my first encounter with the Christian faith. You have said things that I can't forget."

He looks round cautiously before saying: "Can we be overheard? I should like to warn a certain Mr. X. They are trying to involve him in discussions in order to draw out his reactionary political opinions and throw him out of his job." "And who are you?" "A party official!" "And why don't you warn the man yourself?" He looked down and said nothing. Then he said quietly, "Because I'm afraid of the consequences for myself." We talked about the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew, Chapter 10, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Finally he says, "If that could be true for me ..... then I could see some solution."

It is the evening of election day. Some of us have not gone to the polls; we wish to express our strong disagreement with this farce of a "free, secret, election. Everyone is afraid of using the voting-cabins. ("The true friend of peace will cast his vote openly; the cabin will only be used by those who want to conceal their opinions"). Shame and silent hatred were perceptible on the faces of the people who had been forced into voting against their convictions. In a few hours, the nervous tension will be over. Two party officials come to meet Miss --: "Does Miss -- live here?" "I am Miss --." "Why are you not going to the polling station?" "Because I'm a free person and can do as I like." One of the officials a girl, informs her : "You have a false conception of freedom. You are free to cast your vote for peace." "Oh, have you seen any freedom then in our State? Here everything is terror and fear." Both of them look astonished. "We simply can't imagine that anyone could be afraid here." Miss -- begins telling them about what

she sees and hears every day. The visitors' astonishment increases and her manner becomes more and more open. What is said couldn't be true, and therefore it wasn't true. Miss -- grows impatient and turns to the second official, who has said nothing as yet. "Tell me what you think, you're a sensible person. Isn't it true that everybody here is frightened?" She opens her eyes wide and says softly, after a pause, "I'm a party official." The other girl is getting impatient: "Come on, let's go, it's no use." When they are 50 feet away Miss-- calls to the first one: "What sort of denunciation are you going to make against me?" She answers haughtily: "We don't denounce anybody." "But you will certainly be asked what I said." She reflects: "I shall say that you said, you were a free person and could do what you liked." "Nothing else?" "No, nothing else." "Then I'm glad that you still have some shreds of decency left." The second girl then breaks in suddenly, in quite a different voice: "I have a great favour to ask you. Don't speak so frankly with other officials. We shall not denounce you." And the first one, who had been so fanatical, agrees and says with real kindness, "Yes, that's what I should like to ask you too. Otherwise things may go badly with you some day." They came back and shook hands. "I'm glad to have met two decent human beings." Two fanatics had become human beings.

He was a poor boy who had suffered a lot. His mother was dead, his father ill and unemployed, the family had twice been bombed out and lost everything. He had lost an arm through bomb-splinters and had an injured heel, so that he had had to postpone studying for a technical career and spend six months in the hospital. Here he had become a Christian and was now a cheerful member of the church. One day he broke down. He had been told that he would not pass the examination unless he joined the Communist Party. Next day he joined it, without conviction. For four months he went about with this lie on his conscience. During Advent he did not attend Communion. A month later he realised, "It's better to do the lowest kind of work all one's life, if one can only pray and believe again." Four weeks before the examination he announced his intention to leave the Party. His fellow-students could not understand, how could he be so foolish? An official said to him, "You have won the respect of all of us. We know that we have mostly weathercocks among us. Can't you try to feel like a real Marxist? We need people like you." They took him along to the Party house. "Why do you want to leave the Party? Are you thinking of your future? This decision will be disastrous for you." As they wouldn't leave him in peace, he said at last: "I joined your Party because I was frightened about myself. Now, because the Christian faith has taken away my fear, I am free from the Party." They let him go in peace, and at the examination the Committee decided, surprisingly enough, "We must let this student pass, because he has a will of his own." He passed the examination. Soon afterwards he fell ill and returned to the hospital. He writes: "Now I know, why God has sent this illness to me: Two of us are studying the Bible together here."

There is no defence against the impact of the Christian faith. One usually realises that at times when every reason for doing so seems to be lacking. " .... and when I went into his room, I was frightened. For the party official was sitting in front of his desk with his head in his hands, and weeping. I was horrified. When at last he raised his head, he said; "What a criminal I am. Is there any help for me?" What had happened? After completing his studies he worked in a factory with 800 employees. One day a resolution was to be passed against "the "Western war-mongers and capitalists", especially against America. On the evening

before, he resolved, to withhold his vote and if asked why, to reply: "The vote came as a surprise to me. I hadn't had time to think the matter over." Everything went according to plan. First there was a speech full of propaganda and hatred against America. Then the audience was asked to show hands in favour of a certain resolution. No-one voted against, only he abstained from voting and replied as planned. But now something quite unexpected happened. Two women-Communists in the factory insisted that the meeting should decide immediately to dismiss him, because sincere partisans of peace could not possibly work any longer with such a person. Out of 800, only 9 voted in favour of this, but the man had to explain in front of the meeting why he had not voted. So he stood on the platform and had to speak: "This speech", he said, "was full of hatred. Do you think that hatred can produce peace? Hatred can produce nothing but quarrels and disturbance, blood and tears. True peace between man and man and between nationa and nation comes from the God, Who has made peace with us all. Where His peace is accepted, peace will also exist among men. But this resolution says nothing about that." Applause, laughter, opposition. The manager of the factory, a Communist demands that he should defend himself next day in front of 30 party-leaders. As he leaves the hall he is greeted with friendship and respect. An official says softly, "You spoke well." A woman says, "I'm a Christian too, but I have a boy to look after."

Next day he has an interview that lasts an hour. The party-leaders try in vain to lay traps for him. "What do you think of the Soviet Union?" "The Soviet Union is a nation, like other nations. It has a mission from God, like all other nations." Then he is sent out. He heard later that they were very embarrassed what to do with him. There was no ground for dismissing him. On the other hand, he must leave the factory that very day, otherwise the whole propaganda system threatened to break down. People were all talking about this plucky fellow. They decided to use intimidation, so that he would resign his job. He did so, giving a trivial excuse. Before he left a leading Communist in the factory sent for him. When he entered his room, he found a broken man..." He spent the whole evening talking with me, and told me fearful things about his own life."

One man spoke the truth against his will, and another man began to fear God. That is the dynamism of the Gospel, against which there is no defence.

III.

SOME ETHICAL PROBLEMS OF CHRISTIANS LIVING IN EASTERN GERMANY

(from a correspondent)

(Note: this report refers to the situation as it appeared several months ago)

What type of problems concern the thoughtful Christian living in Eastern Germany? The first of these, curiously perhaps to outsiders, is the growing sense of optimism, a growing courage to speak out, a growing protest against the conditions of life. "Never since 1945 has the truth been spoken so openly in the market place." Students challenge Communist lecturers more openly. In the country it sometimes almost breaks into riots. The underground is better organised and aims at singling out particular S.E.D. officials, reporting on their crimes in West Berlin, against the day when the East will be "liberated"!

This whole development is a matter of profound concern as well as a matter for rejoicing. It is a matter for rejoicing in so far as it has a Christian root. The power of the Berlin Kirchentag was tremendous in strengthening Christians to their witness in the faith. This vast community of several hundred thousand people was a miracle of God's grace because of the fellowship which was there created, the way these thousands sang together, prayed together, shared their problems with one another, and could hardly bear to leave the meetings in which their community was expressed. This has had its influence on the confidence of Christians in the East today. There is a more accurate and calmer Christian witness. There is more courage.

This development causes concern however because it is not only based on a new-found Christian fellowship, but also on false political hopes. The underground movement lives on the hope of an early liberation of East Germany from the West. Much of the grumbling and the open expressions of hostility are based on, or fortified with these illusions and whetted with the thought of revenge. It is even suggested that the Russians may be allowing this psychological wave to build up in order to crush it in the future and secure a better hold on their zone than has ever before been the case.

In any case it is the clear opinion of many thoughtful Christians that the Christian does not belong with these illusions or with the underground, partly because the Christian's hope is beyond this world and he is a realist, partly because of the hate therein expressed, partly because it is politically pure folly.

Another problem arises from the large landholdings of the Church. Traditionally most parishes in the East have been supported by the rent from large landholdings. In 1945-6 during the land reform programme they did not give these holdings up for redistribution. Today each piece of land is required to deliver a certain quota of the various farm products, a quota so large that the farmers are second only to workers, the most exploited class in East Germany. Land has lost its sale value because of these quotas. Members of the congregation cannot or will not take to themselves or lease the land of the Church because it would only add to their burdens. If the pastor, even with the help of his Church elders, should

farm the land he soon would find himself without time for his pastoral duties. And, the key to the situation, the State refuses now to take this land as a gift or to buy it. So the quotas remain unfulfilled, a crime which in the East Zone is punishable by severe prison sentences or even death (sabotage of production). This sword of Damocles hangs over a large proportion of the pastors in the East, in country areas. The State says nothing. It is waiting for the right moment.

The greatest problem at the moment is the school problem, specifically the elections of Parents Advisory Councils - it is made clear that their purpose is to promote the "democratization" of the schools, their ideological consciousness, and to further the school reform law (of 1946?). In other words it is excluded from the beginning that these Parents Councils should be in any way a consultation of the government and the teachers with the parents, or that the free will of the parents should be expressed therein. As background for this is the fact that all of the public schools in the East Zone are already completely dominated by Communist ideology so that every Christian teacher who remains in them must teach in double talk and train his students likewise to dissemble. The only redeeming spot in this picture is the hour of religious instruction permitted in some places from teachers paid by the Church.

The essential question here was sharpened by the action of the Church leadership of the Land Church of Province Saxony and Anhalt (Magdeburg) which advised all Christian parents not to take part in the elections, with the single exception of the case in which there is a real possibility of electing to the council a Christian who is committed to the principle of a Christian school. All Christians so elected are to be called together periodically by the Church for "Willensbildung" (literally: training of the Will) concerning their duties and witness on these councils. One question concerns the value and limits of such a declaration from Church headquarters. Some Christians saw in it a danger in that it undercuts the responsible action of each Christian at his place of work and duty, substituting a false conception of the power of the Church as a visible commanding authority. Others saw in it the necessary pastoral help which only a church leadership in a position to see the issues in their totality, can give.

A second question concerns the degree to which Christians are prepared to counter the Marxist ideological school with a Christian conception of education which is not bound with traditional German nationalism, and bourgeois values. Some Christians raise the question of whether the Church really had the strength to fulfil its demands for even a small number of Christian confessional schools, if their foundation were to be approved.

Another question : Were the Magdeburger Church leaders not succumbing to the temptation, present for every Christian in the East Zone, to state a principle with absolute clarity, which can only be lived out by a small number? Was it wise to demand such an absolute witness on this point and not on a number of others where the Christian was equally involved in the Communist system? Was it wise to lay down such a line of action as might destroy that flexibility which makes it possible as a Christian to talk to Communists? Should the Church be here on a fighting line, or should it seek the redemption of its enemies?

These questions are sharpened by the word Kulturkampf. Should the Church declare war on the Communist school and carry it through? Some people point out the Christian responsibility for truth, to speak it and maintain it. On the other side it is claimed that this kulturkampf would cut off all chance to work further by speaking in the framework of the school system.

What is the fundamental relation of the Christian to the measures and organisations instituted by the Communist state? In this area there is great fertility in Christian thinking but very little clarity.

The primary danger in the East Zone today is that youth may become nihilistic, because there remains no understanding of the positive function of the State or of authority in general. He must be very careful not to condemn the social order of the Communists outright and in toto, for fear of leaving these youth nothing to which to cling. There are times when we must accept a measure of the state which we believe to be wrong, in order to help those who are forced into it, to find their way as Christians. We must remember that the Christian lives under the consciousness of his sin in every social situation, that it is nothing new for him to have compromised with injustice, and to be caught in an unjust system which he by silence accepts. We should be realistic about this fact and should in reality live by God's forgiveness, and in the freedom which this gives.

As a principle this is criticised only when applied to concrete cases. But there is one question: Does it make a method of political procedure out of the foregiveness of sins?

Two concrete cases may be cited:

The question of private property and the coming of collective farms: There is no question concerning the danger which is involved in the growth of rural collectivisation, and the octopus growth of the retail and wholesale trade near monopoly, the Handels Organisation. Freedom is lost when a farmer or merchant must surrender to one of these. He can no longer maintain the political or ideological independence he had before. He becomes in every material way dependent on the State. Even his family life loses its unity and privacy, above all, through the living conditions on a collective farm.

Nevertheless some Christians ask: Is it right for the Church totally to condemn the confiscation of private property and the development of the collective system, for its injustice, and its totalitarianism? Is not the principle of absolute private property in land only a development of the last 100 years, under bourgeois capitalist influence? Does it not rest on a false individualism?

Also, is the Church not cut off from the possibility of speaking to men who will be forced into these collective farms in any case, if it speaks in total condemnation of the measure. Can she give to the victims of this injustice the comfort and hope and the pastoral care, showing them how they can, even in this difficult situation, live and witness as Christians? Is the alternative to collectives, small private business or farming, really freer of spiritual temptation than the collective farm itself?

The validity in such points is generally accepted and it is agreed that the Church may not speak in the tones of a call to battle. Condemnation of an injustice must never be so phrased as to bring those who suffer under the injustice, to despair of being able to witness or live as a Christian in any positive way.

On the other hand it is held that a clear statement against the injustice of a government measure in fact does not cut off the possibility either of talking to Communists or of offering pastoral help to the victims of injustice. "We stand in conversation with the Communists, because we say 'no' to them."

The idea of adjusting to the life of a collective farm and bearing Christian witness therein would apply equally to a concentration camp or a prison. There is no situation where God is not present, or where a Christian witness is impossible. But within the proclamation of this fact, the Church is still bound to recognise relative degrees of justice and injustice.

The second concrete example was the question of membership in the Freie Deutsche Jugend. Some say it is wrong to condemn the FDJ outright, or advise Christians not to go into it in every case, because political, economic, and social forces compelled them to go into it in large numbers. Perhaps two-thirds of all members of the Christian Junge Gemeinde are now members of the FDJ. Is it not better to seek seriously to advise these youth as to how they might bear their Christian witness in this difficult and admittedly compromising position, perhaps by saying a Christian word to Communists on occasion, standing against particular injustices, lies, etc.?

But many others thinking out of long experience in the Nazi period, say that they could not advise any Christians to join the FDJ or approve the decision if it were made. He must, when his advice is asked, advise 'no'. The dilemma however is immediately revealed in the analogy with the public schools and labour unions. Both of these institutions are quite as thoroughly Communist controlled and quite as active as centres of Communist ideology and politics as the FDJ. Could a Christian be advised to become a public shcool teacher or a worker?

The fundamental problem here is that most Christians are today members of some Communist organisation. They were placed there by virtue of the Russian organisation of society in the East Zone just after the war, when as conquered peoples, they could only obey. Today others become members because it is less and less possible to remain safe or to gain a living unless one joins. The pastor must be careful about laying down principles which involve great danger and sacrifice to the layman but comparatively little to himself in his protected economic position. It has been said: We must avoid the temptation to become prophets out of our security. The pastor or other worker must try to help his church members in their predicament. This means if one is a member of a communist dominated organisation that one seeks to understand, despite the propaganda pressure, what the truth is. It means that one tries to come into real spiritual contact with the Communists, to expose their inner anxieties and problems, to witness to one's faith. Every sincere talk with a communist is an opportunity. It may be that at a particular point the Christian is called on to take a stand at danger to himself. But the Christian before God must find that point for himself.

This kind of pastoral help and this kind of activity on the part of lay Christians actually does lead thousands of them to take the step which the pastor in his security cannot tell them directly to take - namely to resign from the FDJ because of their faith.

One Christian has stated this as follows: We stand in conversation with the Communists today on the basis of the 'no' which we say to their ideology and to the injustices of their régime. The fact that this 'no' is at the same time dynamic and positive, that it seeks the well-being of men and of the state, makes this conversation fruitful. We have not yet come to the place where every opportunity for influence is closed to us, and where conversation is no longer possible. It may someday come to outright warfare with the state on some issue, for instance the school problem (a few advocate the removal of all evangelical children from the schools and their private, necessarily illegal education, until the schools become more reasonable). But when it comes to this battle we will accept it as an unfortunate necessity, as a kind of failure of the witness which we should have borne more powerfully to the loving God. We should not make a virtue of it.

IV.

"THE SPHINX HAS SPOKEN" - THE SITUATION IN EGYPT

(from a correspondent)

Though the full significance of the tragic events in Cairo on the 26th January is not yet clear, enough is known to enable the main outlines of the picture to be drawn. What was foreshadowed in the article which appeared in the January issue of "World Dominion" has been realised in fire and blood.

How delicate is the balance between order and disorder in Egypt has been amply proved. The Wafdist government lived under the delusion that it could encourage popular demonstrations in support of its policy and clamp down on them at any moment. The incidents of the 26th January have proved that, whatever was the case in the past, this is no longer true. The Wafdists were literally played with fire and their fingers have been burned. They sowed the wind and have reaped the whirlwind.

There is, however, abundant evidence to show that the desturction of property on the 26th January was not just a case of the mob getting out of hand. The incendiarism was carefully planned and organised. Not all the facts have yet been disclosed, but it would appear that two groups were implicated. The extreme leftist element within the Muslim Brotherhood exploited the opportunity to destroy bars, cinemas and other places of amusement, against which they had protested both on religious grounds and because they held that it was wrong for the public in Cairo to be indulging in pleasure while fellow-Egyptians were suffering in the Canal Zone.

The other group involved was the so-called Socialist party, which has marked revolutionary tendencies. It had already uttered the threat "After the British, the capitalists". It directed its attack against all property that stood for wealth and luxury. Hence the destruction of Shepheard's Hotel, Groppi's restaurants, garages and expensive motor cars.

Mingled with these evidences of a rising tide of protest against the laxity and lavish extravagance of modern life in Cairo, there were also signs of profound anger against the British, especially because of the vigorous action taken the preceding day at Ismailia against the Egyptian auxiliary police. It is patent that the Cairo police, either spontaneously or under orders, connived at first at the assaults on British property, and in certain cases instigated them. But the British were not the only foreigners to suffer loss of life and property. The extreme nationalist spirit manifested itself in other forms of xenophobia, resulting in the burning of shops belonging to Syrians, Greeks and Jews.

Every effort was apparently made both by the authorities and by those responsible for the outrages, to prevent the uprising from taking a religious turn. No church or mission property was attacked. No missionary was assaulted, no Egyptian Christian injured because of his religion. The reason for this manifest desire to avoid religious complications may have been the violent reaction with the country which followed the burning of the Coptic Church in Suez, and the cruel assault on Christians there, a month before.

The Christian community was, however, badly shaken by the breakdown of authorit and the collapse of public order in Cairo on the 26th January. Christians argued that, if incendiarism and murder could reign unchecked for several hours in a city like Cairo because of class hatred or intense nationalism, what might not happen in the provinces should there be an outbreak of religious fanaticism? After the events in Suez the Copts had submitted a petition for the redress of their wrongs - the abolition of permits for Church buildings; full freedom to teach the Christian faith to Christian children in all schools: equality of treatment as regards government appointments; and, in particular, in posts concerned with public security; and equal opportunities for broadcasting religious services. Now they began to wonder whether even these guarantees, if granted, would be sufficient.

Grim as was the loss of life and property in Cairo, and serious the blow dealt to Egypt's good name abroad, yet the results may, on balance, prove to be salutary. What exactly was the intention of those who were responsible for the tragic incidents of the 26th January, and what it was they hoped to achieve, has not yet been established. Possibly they aimed at overthrowing the Wafdist Cabinet and substituting a government of their own. More probably they wished to demonstrat the strength of the popular movement which they represented. On the other hand, their followers may have gone to further extremes than they intended.

Two lessons may be learned from what occurred. In the first place, there is a limit to the passive acquiescence of the common people in the corruption, laxity and extravagance of the ruling classes. If economic and social reform is not pressed forward peacefully, then inevitably there will result some kind of revolution. It has taken a long time for the Pasha class to wake up to this new fact, but they seem to have done so at last. If Egypt is to be saved from slipping down into chaos then something constructive must be done, and done quickly, to avert the consequences of the present policy of drift.

The second lesson to be derived from this tragedy is that xenophobia, expressed in violence and looting, will destroy all confidence on the part of the foreign community in Egypt's political and economic stability. If this happens Egypt's economy will be in danger of crumbling. Unbridled nationalism must be curbed in the national interest.

The events of the 26th January may prove to mark a turning-point, not only in Anglo-Egyptian relations, but in the settlement of Near East problems. The Egyptian government may now look more sympathetically on the proposal of a Middle East Command. But if the intention of this Middle East Command is to stem the tide of Communist penetration, then history teaches us that it must be supplemented by a political and economic pact covering the whole area. The continuance of the present state of political and economic instability in the Middle East will inevitably lead either to a recurrence elsewhere of what happened in Cairo and the emergence of some revolutionary government, or to a revival of the kind of reactionary Islam represented by the Muslim Brotherhood. Either result could spell a period of difficulty and danger for the Christian Church and the missionary movement. On the other hand, an over-all settlement of the problems of the Middle East, be they strategic, political or economic, might readily include the solution to a series of problems, which at present, because treated in isolation, seem insoluble. Within it might reasonably be found the answer to the question of Arab-Jewish relations, of the Palestine issue, and of the Arab refugee problems; without it, the future outlook for the Middle East is grim.

V.

THE PROBLEM OF THE ARAB REFUGEES AND THE JEWS

(from a correspondent)

1. How did it come about?
2. Who are responsible for the tragedy?
3. How can it be remedied?

1. How did it come about?

When I visited the Arab countries surrounding Israel and the young independent State itself, in the middle of '48, I got the following picture of what had happened with the Arab refugees.

The Arab armies were marching towards and partly into Palestine. The tension between Jews and Arabs inside the beleaguered country rose to breaking point. All kind of rumours were spreading. The British, before withdrawing from the country had evacuated by force the Arab population of some places where they feared disturbances might occur. So the Arab population of Tiberias was moved in British military trucks. This is what initiated the "sauve qui peut" of the Arabs, say the Jews. The second cause of the mass-flight of the Arabs, according to Jewish

information, were orders given by Arab leaders and by officers commanding the advancing Arab armies. The Mufti was singled out by my Jewish informants (the Press and Propaganda Service of the Jewish Government, and its leader Dr. L. Cohn) as the source of the idea behind this move. Before the attack these Arab leaders were absolutely convinced they would drive the Jews into the sea and once and for all finish with them. To do this well and quickly it was desirable to fight Jews only. The presence of Arabs amongst them would mean a double handicap. First: these Arabs would produce, if well paid, spies and traitors. Secondly: when the final hour of reckoning came it would be very difficult to pick out the Jews and spare the Arabs. The Jews told me they were in possession of written orders to this effect issued by the Mufti and by army-group commanders.

According to the Jewish leaders there was a more important reason still for the Arabs to take to their heels, and that was their anxiousness to loot. When the Arab armies, expected to be completely victorious, were drawing near, they all went out to meet them, in order to march in with the victors and plunder everything they could lay hands on. For the Jews whom I met at that time, this theory was a completely satisfactory explanation as to why more than a million Arabs ran away from their homes and tried to settle along the borders of new Israel.

Last but not least the Jews also mentioned the acts of terrorism perpetrated by Sterngroupers and Irgun Zwei Leumi soldiers at Deir Jasīn, Nasr ed-Dīn and some other places. Dr. Cohn said to me: "These men, who committed acts for which no words are sharp enough to condemn them put mud on the most glorious pages of the history of our wondrous national revival".

The Arab leaders I talked with said that they were convinced that Jewish terrorism was the sole reason for a panic which struck nearly all the Arabs living among Jews in Palestine. The rumours of the Deir Jasīn massacre and of others caused the mass-refugee problem. Not the evacuation of Arabs by British troops from places where clashes with the Jews were feared. Nor orders emanating from the Mufti or local troop-commanders. The principal Jewish explanation, that of the Arab aim of joining the victorious troops in order to come back in their rear and then to loot, was generally and vehemently denied. The Arab spokesmen said it was understood by every Arab that he had the best chance of looting who would quietly sit in his house waiting the arrival of the victorious Arab armies and then go and take from the houses of his Jewish neighbours those objects he knew and coveted most. Nor had they left their houses and lands, fleeing in panic, in obeyance to orders issued by the Mufti. There was no organisation which had enlisted and trained them to a strict obedience. The word of the Mufti, even had it reached them, would not have driven them to leave behind house, land, and furniture, that is to say all they possessed in the world and all that meant safety from desolate need for them. Never would they leave what came down to them from forbears from time immemorial - unless struck by terror, driven by a mass psychosis of fear. That is what had happened. Fear for the Jews and their merciless terrorism had driven them on as soon as they heard the ghastly tales of Deir Jasīn and other places.

2. Who are responsible for the tradegy?

When I met both parties the war was over. Arabs all knew the cruelty of war. But they would forget it when they went back and rebuilt their houses and again ploughed their land. But then the great deception came - there was no return for them. Was it possible? It could not be! The Jews had been their neighbours, even

more the guests in their country. The Arabs wanted justice, the Arabs wanted to go back to their homesteads. With this the real tragedy began, the Arab refugee problem became what it is today. People who ask for justice, who crave for it because they are human; they want to go back - there is no other solution for them; no Red Cross Society, no U.N.O., no neighbouring Arab people can help them o money, no land for re-settlement will do, one thing only: a return to their homes. Thus the disease of a devouring hatred set in amongst them. This is the core of the Arab refugee problem. There is no remedy for it if that cancer is not cured.

Let us see how the cure could start there. The Arab victims of the Palestine war feel betrayed from several sides. Betrayed by the Arab allies, by their promises and by the predictions of their own leaders, betrayed by the British who left them alone after having admitted the most dangerous enemy in their country, by the Americans who gave the Jews their chance and who let them, the Arabs, be beaten and driven off their property. But there is only one party that is directly responsible- that really drove them away from house and land and that prevents them from going back. The Jews are the real enemy. They acted towards them with a complete negation of humanitarian feeling of justice. They are the cause of their growing sense of inferiority.

What do the Jews say to this? They have told me and are telling the whole world, and most of all they are trying to convince themselves, that they are not to be blamed: blame all the others who persecuted them in Europe and those who did not offer them a possibility to live as free and decent people in the countries of Europe, after the war, or who did not allow them to immigrate into the vast emptiness of their continents, those who drove them to Palestine, the only place in the world where every Jew was welcome. There they were attacked by the Arabs and they had to fight for survival with their backs to the sea.

This is true for us who know the recent world history. We understand how it came to happen. But the Arabs who were driven out of their country by the Jews, to make room for them and who see them now behaving as the legitimate owners of their houses and lands, don't understand this and are not interested in this. They only suffer injustice, intolerably and day by day because of the Jew.

3. How can it be remedied?

This is the reason why the Jew must strive to heal the cancer of hatred which is in the centre of the Arab refugee problem. No other party can do this. The Jew has to come down from his high seat of a victor. He has openly to declare to the refugees that he wronged them gravely, that he wants to make good, that he asks permission to lead the way in making good a suffering for which they, the refugees, were not to blame.

This is the way and it is the only right one to cure the disease of heart, the feelings of the refugees. Only thus they may be willing to give up the desire to go back to their property. This may lead them to accept the help of others as well and to look away from what has been and to believe in a new way of life.

If the Jews recognize the moral principle of the refugee problem and have the courage and insight to act in the only way which can bring the solution, then a deadlock for the state of Israel could be broken up.

The words which the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs said to me when we met in Tel -Aviv a short time after the victory of his people, proved that he understood the deep roots of the problem. H.E. Moshe Sharett said: "My people originall came from this country, then we were driven out of it and started on our wanderings through many countries and among many peoples and after much suffering we have come back, never to leave this country again." " I said: "Of course you realise what your statement inevitably includes? What are you thinking of?" "I think that your idea means that you accept to be for ever a part of the Near East and of its peoples and that you are willing to take your share in its grandeur and servitude and that you become real friends of your neighbours." "And so I meant it," Moshe Sharett replied.

Now the time for action seems to have come. Victorious Israel has come down from the clouds of ecstacy to the harsh reality of its insolvable economical problems and to the realisation of its being surrounded by a broad band of human misery and hatred. Israel may have understood by now how uneasy one lives in the house and on the lands of a fellow-creature whose only fault it was to have been in one's way and to be the weaker party. This reminds me of the words of a leading Zionist who did not live to see Israel's victory, the kind of victory he did not want to see. Professor Judah Magnes, President of the Hebrew University during more than twenty years of its short existence, said: (I quote from memory) "My people who suffered so much as minorities, as the weaker parties, can never find its happiness upon the sufferings of another people and can never succeed by injustice done to a weaker nation."

There is one way out of the Arab refugee problem. It is the way of justice and Israel alone can lead on the way. When she does the moment for the refugees will come to start towards a new possibility of safeguarding their human dignity. And then the efforts of others grow and accomplish their purpose.